

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 1032

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ET, ILO

SUBJECT: ILO DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL VISITS ADDIS

1. BERTIL BOLIN, NEWLY APPOINTED DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ILO, VISITED ADDIS ABABA JANUARY 22-26 ACCOMPANIED BY MR. LAGERGRIN, ILO INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS EXPERT. PROGRAM ARRANGED BY ILO AFRICAN REGIONAL OFFICE IN ADDIS INCLUDED SERIES OF COURTESY CALLS ON SENIOR OFFICIALS OF UNECA, OAU AND UNDP AND VISITS TO CONFEDERATION OF ETHIOPIAN LABOR UNIONS AND FEDERATION OF EMPLOYERS OF ETHIOPIA. BOLIN WAS ALSO RECEIVED BY MINISTER OF NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TADESSE TEREFE AND CHIEF LABOR COMMISSIONER TEFERRA HAILE SELASSIE, WITH WHOM SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WERE HELD CONCERNING ON-GOING ILO PROJECTS IN ETHIOPIA. FINALLY, BOLIN HAD LENGTHY INTERVIEW WITH BG TEFERI BANTE, PMAC CHAIRMAN, AND GROUP OF EIGHT MILITARY OFFICERS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF SOCIAL COMMITTEE OF DERGUE AND MAJ. MENGISTU.

2. SUBSTANCE OF TALKS CENTERED ON BASIC ILO OBJECTIVES IN LABOR STANDARDS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT, AND WORLD EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AND HIGHLIGHTED AREAS OF MUTUAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ILO AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ADDIS AND BETWEEN ILO AND ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT. ALL ACCOUNTS INDICATE CONVERSATIONS MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL AS LAYING FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE.

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3. BOLIN TOOK OCCASION OF HIS CALL ON ETHIOPIAN MILITARY LEADERS TO RAISE SUBJECT OF STATUS DETAINED LABOR LEADERS, ESPECIALLY BEYENE SOLOMON WHO STILL HOLDS SEAT ON ILO GOVERNING BODY. LETTER PRESENTED BY BOLIN ASKED FOR INFORMATION ON CHARGES AGAINST BEYENE AND DIPLOMATICALLY SUGGESTED EARLY HEARING AND TRIAL. MAJ. MENGISTU REPLIED THAT DETAINEES HELD FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS, NOT TRADE UNION ACTIVITY, AND THAT AN ETHIOPIANS THEY WOULD BE TRIED BY ETHIOPIAN LAW. IMPRESSION CLEARLY LEFT, HOWEVER, THAT PMAC WOULD LOOK FURTHER INTO MATTER THEIR OWN INITIATIVE, BUT NOT IN RESPONSE TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE. SUBJECT DROPPED AT THAT POINT, AND BOLIN CAME AWAY FEELING SITUATION LOOKED BRIGHTER FOR DETAINEE PROVIDED OUTSIDE INFLUENCES COULD BE HELD IN CHECK.

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